

# St John the Baptist CofE (Controlled) Primary School

Church Street, Ruyton XI Towns, Shrewsbury, SY4 1LA

**Inspection dates** 19–20 November 2014

|                                |                      |                      |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Inadequate           | 4        |
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b>          | <b>2</b> |
| Leadership and management      |                      | Good                 | 2        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils |                      | Good                 | 2        |
| Quality of teaching            |                      | Good                 | 2        |
| Achievement of pupils          |                      | Good                 | 2        |
| Early years provision          |                      | Requires improvement | 3        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Leaders acted with urgency to successfully address the shortcomings identified at the last inspection. They have ensured that safeguarding requirements are met, that the quality of teaching has improved and that pupils now achieve well.
- Governors have supported and challenged the headteacher to make the necessary changes that have ensured the school has improved rapidly.
- The school's systems for making and recording all the required checks on adults working in the school are rigorous and robust.
- Pupils' behave well at all times. They take responsibility for their conduct in and out of lessons. The school's values are promoted in all aspects of school life. As a result, pupils show a high degree of tolerance and respect.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teaching builds pupils' resilience because pupils are challenged to think critically and apply knowledge creatively.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Their achievement in writing and mathematics has improved significantly since the previous inspection.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not have sufficient higher-level reading skills to fully interpret or understand more challenging texts.
- Despite recent improvements, provision in the early years is not good because staffing is not secure and children do not achieve well in writing.
- Pupils do not have a realistic awareness of what it might be like to live in different parts of the West Midlands, or elsewhere in Britain.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in six lessons and through a series of walks around the school. While visiting lessons, inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books and talked to pupils about their learning.
- In addition to looking at pupils' books during lessons, inspectors reviewed pupils' work with the headteacher and heard some pupils read. They also observed playtime and lunchtime activities, watched an assembly and visited the after-school club.
- Meetings were held with: the headteacher and other senior staff; the Chair and five other members of the Governing Body; a representative of the local authority; and a group of pupils. Inspectors spoke informally to other staff and pupils around the school.
- Inspectors took account of the 31 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and responses to the school's own surveys of parents' opinions. Inspectors spoke informally to 19 parents as they brought their children to school.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, which included: the school's checks on how well it is doing and plans for improvement; evidence about how teachers are set targets to improve pupils' progress; records of the school's checks on the quality of teaching; minutes of meetings of the governing body; reports on the school's progress from local authority officers; information about pupils' progress over time; and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Sandra Hayes, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Denise Dalton,

Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.*

### Information about this school

- St John the Baptist is smaller than most primary schools.
- Just under one-in-ten pupils are disabled or have special educational needs. This proportion is similar to other schools nationally.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- Around ten percent of pupils are disadvantaged and eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in care). This is below the national average.
- Children in the Reception year attend full time and are taught in a class alongside some Year 1 pupils.
- Since the previous inspection, a section 48 inspection of the school's collective worship and denominational ethos has taken place and a monitoring inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors to assess the school's response to being placed in special measures.
- The 2014 provisional end of Key Stage 2 test results show that the school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure long-term stability in the early years by securing staffing and recent improvements so that all children achieve well, especially in writing.
- Ensure pupils' reading skills enable them to read competently for different purposes across a range of subjects by:
  - systematically teaching the higher-level skills of understanding and interpreting texts
  - providing a wide range of reading materials that appeal to pupils' interests
  - providing opportunities for pupils to use sophisticated reading skills in different subjects.
- Help pupils to develop a more rounded understanding of life in modern Britain by:
  - giving them experience of visiting a range of different-sized settlements, including larger town and cities
  - helping pupils to appreciate the potential benefits, as well as the challenges, of living in different types of locations within the regional context.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- Leaders at all levels share an ambition for the school to provide the best for its pupils. The headteacher is reflective and leads the school with quiet determination. She has the trust and respect of staff, governors and parents. She has established a climate in which teachers actively seek to improve their practice.
- Leaders responded quickly and effectively to the shortcomings in safeguarding procedures identified at the previous inspection. Thorough checks are made on all adults who come into the school and are recorded in detail. Robust systems ensure leaders and governors continuously check that procedures are followed correctly. Safeguarding systems meet statutory requirements in all aspects.
- Senior leaders use the newly implemented tracking system to accurately identify strengths and areas for improvement. Action plans are well thought out and provide a clear framework for development.
- The work of subject coordinators and teachers responsible for other aspects of the school's work has improved since the previous inspection. Subject leaders contribute usefully to senior leaders' views of the quality of teaching and governors' understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Leaders regularly check the quality of teaching using lesson observations, information about pupils' achievement over time and evidence from the work in pupils' books. They use this information to identify points for improvement and, subsequently, check if teachers have followed this advice. This has helped leaders to precisely target training and support to meet each teacher's needs. This is the main reason why teaching has improved and is now good.
- Leaders use the school's development plan, information about pupils' achievement and the national 'Teachers' Standards' to set appraisal targets for teachers. Teachers know they must meet these targets to qualify for salary increases.
- Leaders' actions have brought about improvement in standards in literacy. Pupils now make good progress in reading and writing. They achieve particularly well in writing. Well-focused plans are in place to replicate this success in reading.
- The school has worked with other local schools to design a helpful approach to assessing pupils' progress in the new National Curriculum for mathematics. Criteria are being agreed for reading and writing. Pupils' achievements are clearly communicated to parents.
- The school's curriculum is planned in detail to give pupils a breadth of interesting experiences, both in and out of school. It enables pupils to develop basic skills and to achieve success in expressive subjects, such as music, drama and art. Themes in the curriculum help pupils develop a good understanding of the local area and provide an awareness of different faiths in the wider world. The curriculum has more limited opportunities to help pupils develop an appreciation of factors affecting people's lives in different areas of the region, or in other parts of Britain.
- Leaders have used additional funding from the government effectively and have checked it is making a difference. For example they have ensured that pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding achieve as well as other pupils. Similarly, the primary school physical education and sport premium has been used to give pupils plenty of opportunities to be active, both during and after the school day. As one pupil told an inspector, 'There is always something to do!'
- Leaders ensure the school's values are modelled and promoted by staff. They have ensured no groups of pupils underachieve. In this way, leaders have ensured pupils have equality of opportunity and are free from discrimination.
- The local authority has supported the school well since the previous inspection. It helped the school quickly address weaknesses in safeguarding procedures. Well-designed, appropriately paced training for

teachers and subject leaders has been effective in helping them to improve.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- Governance is effective because governors have ensured the school has rapidly improved.
- Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. They receive detailed and accurate information from the headteacher, which they challenge and test out using published performance data.
- Governors' meetings are focused on ensuring governors meet statutory responsibilities and hold the headteacher to account for the school's performance.
- Governors have supported the headteacher in taking decisive action to address underperformance, which has led to improvement in the quality of teaching. They have redeployed staff appropriately to stabilise the quality of early years provision and are taking action to resolve the remaining issues. Conversely, governors have used the school's pay policy to reward teachers for their contribution to the rapid improvement in pupils' achievement.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Interactions between pupils, or between adults and pupils, exemplify the school's values, as they indicate genuine mutual respect. For example, pupils politely hold doors open for adults. Even the very youngest pupils treat each other kindly, sharing equipment and taking turns without the need for adults to remind them.
- Pupils behave impeccably around the school. There is very little unacceptable behaviour. When it does occur, pupils are well supported to make amends and to learn from their mistakes.
- Pupils keep the school tidy. They look after equipment and put things away when they have finished using them. Pupils wear their school uniform with pride.
- Pupils told inspectors that bullying is very rare. They said they were not aware of any name-calling or other unkindness. Should it happen, pupils know who to talk to. Older pupils are confident they can sort out minor disagreements for themselves.
- Pupils have mature attitudes to learning. They follow instructions immediately, listen attentively to teachers and get on with their work quickly. This contributes to the good progress they make. Pupils persevere with given tasks and want to do well. On the few occasions when their work is too easy, pupils comply with the task, but do not push themselves further. This is why behaviour is not judged to be outstanding.

#### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Procedures for checking the suitability of staff to work with children are thorough. Rigorous systems ensure these checks are recorded in detail. Visitors to the school are closely vetted.
- Pupils' enjoyment of the school is reflected in their high attendance rates. Almost all pupils arrive at school on time each morning. The school keeps a close check on punctuality and issues reminders to parents if pupils arrive late.
- The school helps pupils understand how to stay safe in school, at home and when out and about in the village. Pupils can clearly explain how to stay safe online and know what to do if they are uncomfortable about anything that happens when using the internet. Pupils do not have a fully measured view about the potential risks they might encounter in larger towns and cities. For example, some pupils spoken to thought there were high rates of crime in all cities and assumed they would not be safe if they visited a

city. This is the reason why the school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is not outstanding.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- High expectations from teachers and the strong sense of trust that exists between pupils and adults ensure pupils are motivated to work hard and are confident to take risks in their learning. As a result, pupils sustain levels of concentration and persevere to overcome difficulties and meet challenges.
- Teaching helps pupils to cooperate and work collaboratively. Pupils learn how to reflect on their own learning and to support their classmates through discussion and shared challenges.
- Teachers set challenging tasks and make it clear to pupils how to succeed. In lessons, they help pupils judge how well they are doing and prompt them to identify how they can improve. Teachers mark pupils' books regularly to give feedback and improvement suggestions after pupils have finished a piece of work.
- Teachers adjust tasks well for pupils of different abilities. They ensure that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are given the support they need, while the most able pupils are usually given a high level of challenge.
- One way that teachers and teaching assistants challenge pupils to explain their thinking is to use questions effectively to help them think critically and creatively. This was observed in all classes, including for the very youngest children in the Reception class. In the best examples of effective questioning, teachers skilfully build challenge through the course of the lesson by using questions to check pupils' knowledge, and then set supplementary questions that require pupils to apply the knowledge to increasingly complex ideas.
- Pupils develop high-level skills in writing and mathematics because, in addition to teachers helping them systematically acquire understanding, they are given frequent opportunities to use this knowledge to support their learning in different subjects.
- Until recently, the teaching of reading has not been sufficiently focused on developing pupils' higher-level skills: those that enable pupils to fully interpret and analyse what they are reading. There have been few opportunities for pupils to use reading skills as part of their learning in other subjects. This is why, despite being able to recognise new words easily, pupils' achievement in reading is a little below that in writing and mathematics.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- Attainment is rising. Provisional results for the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in 2014 indicate that Year 6 pupils' scores were above average in mathematics, writing and the test for grammar, punctuation and spelling. This represents a recovery from the dip in mathematics and writing in 2013. Reading scores were in line with other schools overall. The scores for middle- and higher-ability pupils were slightly above average.
- In the 2014 Key Stage 1 national assessments, Year 2 pupils' attainment was significantly higher than in other schools for reading, writing and mathematics. This was better in all areas than in 2013.
- Standards for pupils currently in Years 1 to 6 are generally above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Remaining gaps in pupils' knowledge that result from previous weaknesses in teaching are being rigorously addressed, so are closing.
- Achievement is rising because pupils are making faster progress than in 2013. For example, the national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2014 indicated that almost all pupils made the progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics. Many exceeded this expectation. Pupils made particularly rapid progress in writing and mathematics.

- Children enter the Reception year with skills that are at least typical for their age. In recent years, they have made expected progress, so have entered Year 1 broadly in line with the expected level of development necessary to start the National Curriculum. Children in the Reception year are currently making good progress and so are developing skills rapidly.
- The most able pupils made much better progress in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014 than similar pupils in previous years. Inspection evidence indicates they achieve well in lessons, so this trend is set to continue.
- The closer tracking of progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has led to teaching that better meets the needs of these pupils. As a result, the progress they make is in line with that of other pupils in the school.
- The effective use of the pupil premium funding has enabled disadvantaged pupils to achieve as well as other pupils in the school. The small number of eligible pupils means that comparisons to other pupils nationally cannot be made.
- Since the last inspection, pupils' writing has improved at a faster rate than in other schools. School data indicate this trend continues. Pupils' books show they learn to write in a range of styles, using different language techniques confidently and accurately. As they move through the school, pupils develop their own style by writing for a variety of purposes in different subjects.
- Pupils learn to listen carefully to teachers and to one another. They confidently use talk to help their own learning and that of their classmates. Pupils easily switch from informal talk to speaking more formally in class or individually with adults.
- Many pupils are currently exceeding expected progress in mathematics as a result of improved teacher subject knowledge and a more systematic approach to teaching basic skills. Pupils confidently explain how to use mathematical strategies to solve everyday problems.
- Pupils enjoy reading and talk enthusiastically about books. They are able to decipher new words confidently because they have been well taught to use phonics (knowledge about letters and the sounds they make). Nevertheless, pupils do not attain as well in reading as they do in writing and mathematics. Some older pupils say they do not like the books made available for them to read at school and that they prefer to bring in books from home. Some pupils cannot make sense of what they read because they lack the higher-level skills that help them interpret texts and infer meaning when they read.

### **The early years provision**

### **requires improvement**

- There has been a high degree of turbulence in the Early Years Foundation Stage since the previous inspection. Consequently, the quality of teaching and the use of assessment have been inconsistent. The governing body has ensured long-term absence has been covered by a member of school staff and the headteacher has overseen the leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Things are improving as a result.
- The provision now better meets the needs of the range of children. There are more opportunities for children to write, to explore and to investigate and practise newly acquired skills. Nevertheless, arrangements in the Early Years Foundation Stage remain uncertain and so cannot be judged to be good in the longer term.
- Children achieve better in some areas of learning than others. For example, in 2014 no children exceeded the expected early learning goal in writing. The proportions that exceeded this standard in other areas of learning were higher.

- From broadly typical starting points, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have made expected progress in recent years. Consequently, the proportion achieving a good level of development by the end of the Reception year has been similar to, or slightly above, national figures.
- Children currently in the Reception year are confident, happy and are quickly acquiring phonics skills. For example, some very young children told an inspector which of their friends' names did or did not contain particular letters and sounds.
- Children behave well in the Reception class. They follow routines, share equipment and take turns. They play sensibly together and speak kindly to one another.
- Parents are pleased with the improvements to the early years provision. However, they are anxious that the arrangements are not permanent and would like to be more involved with their children's learning.



## What inspection judgements mean

| School | Grade   | Judgement            | Description  |
|--------|---------|----------------------|--|
|        | Grade 1 | Outstanding          | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.   |
|        | Grade 2 | Good                 | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.   |
|        | Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.   |
|        | Grade 4 | Inadequate           | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

## School details

|                                |            |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 123498     |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Shropshire |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 450412     |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

|  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                        |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary controlled           |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–11                           |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                          |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 129                            |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body             |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Sarah Bayliss                  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Julie Ball                     |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 4 February 2014                |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01939 260445                   |
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